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THE WHITE HOUSE
Washington

November 16, 1953

MEMORANDUM TO: Allen Dulles

25X1A

FROM: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: "Winter of Discontent"

1. There is a sensing in the intelligence community that serious food scarcities are going to affect Soviet control of their satellites during the coming winter. While actual starvation is not expected, there may be bread lines and a very tight supply situation in Poland and Czechoslovakia. In East Germany, although Soviet relief activities have been fairly successful, the discontent of the large industrial population is expected to continue, and from an operational standpoint, this area promises to be a prime target of opportunity.

2. This raises the question as to whether our prior thinking, such as reflected in the "Interim Psychological Strategy Plan for Exploitation of Unrest in Satellite Europe" (PSB D-45, dated July 1, 1953) and related consolidating papers, has taken sufficient account of the various contingencies which might arise. I am particularly concerned with what actions we could take if we were faced with a repetition of the June 17 incidents on a widespread scale, an indigenous general strike call, or food riots. We might even be confronted with a premature mass uprising "a la Warsaw" deliberately provoked by the Soviets.

3. Should any of the foregoing events occur, there will be many questions requiring both clarification and a good measure of agreement among us before we can go into action. Would RIAS participate in relaying an indigenous general strike call, or a repetition of a June 17 march through the streets? Should renewed offers of food relief be made to the satellite governments and the USSR? In the event of East German border incidents, should we guarantee asylum to border guards who aid and abet any flight to freedom of beleaguered people?

4. Furthermore, if unrest occurs in East Germany or Czechoslovakia, should it not be exploited diplomatically by means of a note to the Soviet Government, placing squarely the responsibility for any turmoil on the Soviet regime's dilatory maneuvers with respect to a settlement of the German problem? Since, in order to obtain maximum effect, such a note would have to be coordinated with France, England, and the Bonn Government, we might want to consider an approach to these governments even before the event.

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- 2 -

5. In the Far East there appears to be another situation ready-made for exploitation. The Chinese Communist regime has been forced by a summer of flood, drought, and insect plague to allocate 900,000 tons of food to famine-stricken areas while, at the same time, it continues to export wheat from Manchuria to the USSR. Not only should this permit us to discredit communist "agrarian reform" throughout all of Asia, but it should enable us to expose the true nature of the Sino-Soviet relationship.

6. Other opportunities as well as other questions will undoubtedly occur to you. Because I feel strongly that we must take stock of our capabilities for exploiting the forthcoming "winter of discontent", I propose that we discuss this problem at our next OCB meeting.

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